Rise in consumer price index

194. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the consumer price index have been rising consistently for the last several months and is continuing to register double digits;

(b) if so, the reasons of such high inflation rate despite favourable economic parameters e.g. good agricultural production. growing industrial production, etc.; and

(c) the steps taken, if any, to bring down the inflation rate back to single digit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The inflation based on the consumer price index for industrial workers has ranged from 9.8 per cent in April 1994 to 11.2 per cent in September 1994. In the month of December for which latest data is available, it had dropped to 9.5 per cent.

(b) The price rise in this fiscal year has been more broad based with non-cereal foods recording a higher inflation rate than foodgrains. For example, the price of milk and milk products rose by 11 per cent, eggs, fish and meat by 23 per cent, condiments and spices by 23 per cent, oilseeds by 26 per cent, edible oils by 23 per cent tea by 56 per cent and coffee by 136 per cent. On the other hand the price of wheat, rose by only 0.3 per cent, rice by 8.4 per cent and in case of sugar and Khandsari the prices were lower by 2-3 per cent, compared to last year.

(c) Government has taken a number of steps on the supply side to moderate the price of important essential commodities. Open market sale of rice and wheat from public stocks has enabled the Government to stabilise the price of both these vital cereals, Placing sugar on OGL and imports of 10 lakh tonnes for supply through PDS helped in overcoming the difficulty that arose from sharp drop in domestic output of sugar in 1993-94. Similarly, import of palmolein oil for supply through PDS on a concessional duty of 20 per cent and, more recently placing of all major edible oils under OGL at a reduced duty of 30 per cent is aimed to contain further inflationary pressures in essential commodities. On the demand side the Government is determined to contain the growth of money supply during the current fiscal year for which a number of steps have already been initiated.

Loss of Revenue

195. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Revenue Loss of Rs. 323 crore due to under assessment; CAG reveals excise irregularities" and "13,916 under assessment cases" appearing in the National Herald and Hindustan Times dated 6-5-92 and 11-5-94;

(b) if so, the facts theerof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (c) The observations of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India (C&AG) referred to in the question have been examined and appropriate act on to safe guard revenue interests has been taken.

Survey conducted by I.T. Deptt.

196. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whethr the income-tax department of Delhi had carried out a survey to find out the tax defaulters and widening the base of rendering better services to the tax payers: